



U.S. Department of Justice

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PRESS RELEASE

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Maryland Woman Pleads Guilty to Cashing Stolen United States and District of Columbia Treasury Checks

WASHINGTON – A 26-year-old Hyattsville, Md. woman, Annternet Howard, pleaded guilty today to one count of conspiracy to commit mail fraud for her role in a scheme to steal United States and District of Columbia treasury checks from the mail and cash them at local check-cashing establishments using fake identification documents, U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. announced.

Howard entered her guilty plea in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia before the Honorable John D. Bates. She is to be sentenced on Dec. 10, 2010, and faces between eight and 14 months in prison under voluntary federal sentencing guidelines. As part of her plea, Howard agreed to pay \$12,508.65 in restitution to the United States and District of Columbia treasuries.

According to evidence presented at the plea hearing, beginning in September 2008 and continuing until August 2009, Howard cashed at least eight stolen United States and District of Columbia treasury checks using fake identification documents. These documents bore Howard's photograph but the names and addresses of the intended recipients of the stolen checks. In exchange for cashing these checks, Howard was paid by a co-conspirator a portion of their face value.

Altogether, Howard and the other members of the stolen check scheme were responsible for the theft and fraudulent negotiation of more than \$120,000 in stolen United States and District of Columbia treasury checks. More than 50 individuals and businesses were victimized, either because their mail was stolen or because they sustained an economic loss by cashing the checks.

In announcing today's guilty plea, U.S. Attorney Machen commended the outstanding investigative work of agents of the U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General, Special Agent Derek Savoy of the District of Columbia Office of Inspector General, Postal Inspector Christopher Saunders of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, agents of the U.S. Secret Service, and Detective Michael Pavero of the Metropolitan Police Department. U.S. Attorney Machen also praised the efforts of members of the U.S. Attorney's Office, including Legal Assistant Jamasee Lucas, Paralegal Specialists Sarah Reis and Mary Treanor, and Assistant U.S. Attorneys

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David Johnson and Ellen Chubin Epstein, who are prosecuting the case.

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